

# **THE CONCISE HISTORY OF ST. JUDE THADDEUS' CATHOLIC CHURCH, INOMA.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Inoma is one of the communities/towns in Igala speaking communities in Anambra West L.G.A, Anambra State. The mileage kilometer from Inoma to Nzam is 6.5km; from Inoma to Aguleri junction is 27.2km; from Inoma to heart of Onitsha (Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity, Onitsha) is 40.4km. Inoma, as most other communities in Igalaland, is a confluence town. For It has boundary with Delta State through Illah, Oshimili North L.G.A, Delta State, across the River Niger to Igbedor; another Igala communities. Inoma also has boundary with Kogi State, which is the main Igala speaking State. (It may interest you to know that through Otuocha, Ezi Anam, Nzam Road, one can reach Abuja F.C.T fastly from Inoma to Iregu and Ikkah, Ibaji L.G.A, Kogi State to Idah/ Lokoja Road and then to Abuja F.C.T). Equally, Inoma has boundary with Edo State as one crosses River Niger through Odekpe to Ozogono Market in Edo State.

Within Anambra State; the town Inoma has boundary in the North with Iregu/Ikah; Ibaji L.G.A Kogi State. It has also boundary in the South with Nzam (headquarters of Anambra West L.G.A); in the East Inoma has boundary with Mmiata and in the West with Odekpe.

## **EARLY HUMBLE BEGININGS OF ST. JUDE THADDEUS' INOMA**

The activities of the white Fathers that is the early missionaries were clearly noticed in Igala speaking communities in late 1920s, as they sailed through the River Niger from Lokoja to Onitsha through the native communities into the interior hinterlands. The available information indicated that the early Roman Catholic Missionaries set their feet in Inoma Akato in about 1934 and continued their evangelization there for long period of time. The local populations of Inoma Akato people whole heartedly welcome these white missionaries. Thus, Inoma Akato community was highly hospitable such that they not only welcome the missionaries; they also embraced Christianity to some considerable extent. Consequently, most elders and parents allowed their wives and children to follow the white men religion: Christianity and way of life: education. It is note worthy that between 1934 to 1937, many people were converted to Christianity. Thus, there was need for more intensive evangelization and catechism, which led to establishment of PRAYER CENTRE/ CATHECHUMENATE CENTRE IN INOMA. The centre was build with mud soil and raffia (thatched house). As a result of their singular development, the Roman Catholic Mission in Otuocha (St. Augustine Otuocha Catholic Mission) recognized Inoma has an out station in 1937, which was named St. Jude Thaddeus Out-Station. St Jude was one of the foremost

Apostle of Jesus Christ and cousin brother of Jesus. St. Jude is well known as the Patron Saint of extreme and lost cases: the Saint of all impossibilities. Therefore, the white missionaries chose the named for the church in Inoma “St. Jude Thaddeus”, that he might intercede for them in the extremely difficult work of evangelization in Olumbanasaa. With this therefore, St. Jude Catholic Mission Inoma Akato became was one of the foremost Out- Station created in 1937 in Igala speaking communities in Anambra State. Now Igala speaking communities in Anambra State include Nzam, the headquarters of Anambra West L.G.A and Olumbanasaa. Olumbanasaa is made of seven major communities and their allied villages that merged together for their common goals and interests. They include the following: Inoma, Igbedo, Odekpe, Odomagwu, Ode, Igbokenyi and Alla/ Onugwa. **Note:** Owelle and Ukwala were used to be part and parcel of Inoma Akato but later due to village local politics, small conflicts and most importantly the quest for autonomous existence to maintain the name of ones’ community ancestors, they separated for good and formed allied autonomous communities. Owelle/Ukwala (today this allied autonomous communities have a parish to their credit by name **St. Vincent De Paul Catholic Church Owelle/Ukwala**).

Note: (Igala people is sister clan to Igbo ethnic nationality within the old Eastern region. Other clans in Eastern include: Igala, Iduma, Ibibio, Ijaw, Ifik, Urhobo, Itsekiri, (Igbakiri), Igbanke among others. Igbo people regard the rest of these clans as Olu but most especially the Igala and Iduma people and other peoples that live along the band of River Niger and Benue. Thus, Igbo people would say Ora na Eze, Olu na Igbo, Olu na Igala etc, that is to say Igbo people, their Kings and neighbor s and their relations)

However, the notable missionary father that fast forwarded the evangelization from Otuocha to Olumbanasaa and beyond was Fr. Francis Oboyam, a German missionary Priest who was posted to St. Augustine Catholic Mission Otuocha about 1934. Fr. Oboyam was accompanied by a teacher/ Catechist as his interpreter whose name was one Sylvester Izualor from Igbariam. At first, Fr. Oboyam’s Gospel message was rejected by the people because our people then likened the missionaries to be slave dealers. However, as time went on, our people began to distinguish them from earliest white men who were slave merchants; hence, they began to appreciate their message and embraced Christianity. The movement of the early missionaries was extremely hard and difficult. They had to trek through the foot paths in the tick forest regions of coastal areas. Most times they sailed with canoes to move from one community to another. They settled first at Nzam and then moved to Odomagwu, Ode and down to Inoma Akato: Inoma, Owelle and Ukwalla.

Meanwhile, when St. Augustine Parish Otuocha (Umuoba Anam) was created by the Bishop of Onitsha about 1930s, the most far distanced Out- station

carved out by the white Fathers was Inoma Out- Station- St. Jude Thaddeus in 1937. The white fathers were visiting Inoma once in every six to nine months because Otuocha Parish had numerous out stations and limited numbers of Priests, the road network then was poor and horrible. However, the white fathers did their best and toured all those Out- stations with joy. Otuocha parish comprised of what we have now as Aguleri Region and most parts of Igbariam Region which now have over 40 parishes and many stations and out stations.

Interestingly, everywhere or rather every community/village, the white fathers stepped in, the foremost request they made to the elders/chiefs of the communities was to give them a sizable plots of land to build mainly schools in order to train their children. That clear request from missionaries was generally obliged. Hence, by early 1940, the already acquired land in Inoma was used to build a school which also served as PRAYER CENTRE and CATECHUMENATE CENTRE as well as MASS CENTRE ON SUNDAYS. The school built was Primary School named St. Jude Thaddeus Catholic Mission School Inoma Akato. Now, this St. Jude Thaddeus Catholic Mission School now has metamorphosed to St. Jude Thaddeus Catholic Church Inoma and St. Jude Primary School Inoma (Udama Community Primary School, this name was given after Nigerian/Biafran War in 1973 when the then Military Government took over all Mission Schools in the in the old Eastern Region). However, these two independent institutions have their clearly separate lands and territory/boundary without confusion, but both are owned by the Archdiocese of Onitsha. The Parish is directly run by the Archbishop through the Parish Priest while St. Jude Primary School is run in defined terms and partnership by Archbishop of Onitsha through Archdiocesan Education Board and Anambra State Government through Anambra State Education Board.

### **ST. JUDE THADDEUS' OUT STATION UNDER ST. MARY'S PARISH NZAM**

St. Jude Thaddeus Parish Inoma passed through different parishes as an out station. They include the following: St. Augustine's Parish Otuocha in 1937, Our Lady of Lourdes' Parish, Mmiata Anam and St. Mary's Parish, Nzam in 1978. Note: Nzam is among the Igala speaking communities Anambra State and is currently the headquarters of Anambra West L.G.A. Inoma is next community from Nzam (about 2.5km). The pioneer Parish Priest of St. Mary's Parish, Nzam was Rev. Fr. Dr. Hilary Mary Anisiobi. Fr. Anisiobi was indeed a holy, pious and zealous Mariam priest, who, fought like a tiger to ensure that the seed of Catholic faith is solidly cultivated in Igala land and its various interior hinterlands. The amount of zeal and commitment he exhibited in carrying out his pastoral works was indeed overwhelming and second to none. The elders of the communities then regarded him as "the black missionary father".

However, as a result of his commitment to evangelization, there were numerous converts to Catholic faith. Inoma people were a living testimony to Fr. Anisiobi's faithfulness, pastoral charity and evangelization. Inoma people have a market by name Afia Afor Inoma. It is a daily market but attracted innumerable customers from Delta, Edo and Kogi States as well as Mmiata Anam and other neighbours on Afo market day. So, in 1982 when this Afo Inoma caught fire together with many thatched houses in and around it, the people were heavily devastated, (Note: this fire outbreak had earlier occurred in Inoma in early 1965 but that of 1982 was a colossal disaster). Rev. Fr. Anisiobi practically took it upon himself and came to their rescue. He attracted many supports and relief materials to them. He called the attention of the then governor of old Anambra State, Dr. Jim Nwobodo; who sent many relief materials to them. The Catholic Caritas Rome, the Red Cross, and the then Archbishop of Onitsha, most Rev. Francis Arinze assisted Inoma people tremendously. All these were possible through pastoral charity and ingenuity of Fr. Anisiobi.

Equally, Fr. Anisiobi raised large sum of money with which he built a modern market then, built with bricks and Aluminum sheet as against the old Afo market that was built with raffia "Akanya" which is always prone to catch fire at any moment. It may interest you to know that with this singular gesture Fr. Anisiobi won the hearts of the whole community in Inoma to himself or rather to Catholic Church. The Church Missionary Society- the Anglicans came first to Inoma. They were in Inoma for about fifteen (15) years before the Catholic Church came to Inoma. So, Inoma was predominantly Anglican town, but with this singular gesture of Fr. Anisiobi, very many people got converted to Catholic Faith. Many elders, Chiefs and Parents transferred their children from other denominations' mission Schools to St. Jude Catholic Mission School. Now, the Catholic Church has more numerical strength than any other Christian denomination. Also, now we have more decent physical structures to the glory of God.

Consequently, Inoma people pleaded with Fr. Anisiobi to ask the Archbishop to send a resident priest to Inoma. They argued that if a visiting Rev. Father from Nzam Parish could be of great help to them in that critical moment, how much more blessings they would receive if a Rev. Father lives with them in Inoma. Fr. Anisiobi pleaded with them to exercise some patience as he promised to relay their request to the Archbishop. Inoma people promised to donate large hectares of land to the Catholic Church to build ultra modern church, ultra modern rectory, cottage hospital and other infrastructures the Church deemed fit to build. The elders solemnly promised to donate more lands should the ones already donated were not sufficient for more developments. Meanwhile, with Fr. Anisiobi, St. Jude Inoma out station started having Masses more often than is once in six weeks.

Another priest that made clear remarkable impacts in the lives of Inoma people and indeed the Catholic community of Inoma was Rev. Fr. Dominic Obielosi (1999-2001). We, St. Jude out station regarded him as “the Apostle of Olumbanasa” because of his zealous commitment to evangelization, availability, his catechesis, his piety etc. He organized and built mud house in Inoma where he usually stayed for some days with us in order to enable him available to us. He settled some land disputes, reconciled broken families and marriages and gave a sound Catholic faith and doctrine.

### **THE PRECISE JOURNEY TO PARISH STATUS OF ST. JUDE THADDEUS’, INOMA**

The precise journey to parish status began in December, 2001 when Fr. John Emeka Okafor was the Parish Priest of Nzam. Fr. Emeka Okafor met the elders of Inoma community and pleaded with them to make more plots of land available to Catholic Church so that a Catholic parish might be sited in their community for easy evangelization, and to enable the aged Catholics and children be able to attend Holy Masses on Sundays, among other reasons. The Chiefs and the elders of Inoma under the Royal rulership of their (Eze) king H.R.H Egwuda Onate the Atta Okakwu of Inoma welcomed the humble request of Fr. Emeka Okafor. Thus, in February, 2002, a large expands of land was donated to Catholic Church unconditionally. This singular gesture coincided with the general requests and plea the whole community of Inoma made to Fr. Anisiobi in 1982. When they pleaded that a Rev. Fr. be allowed to stay permanently with them and a parish be sited in Inoma, that they were willing to donate sizable expands of land for such projects. Hence, when Atta Okakwu and his cabinet elders donated the land on behalf of the whole Inoma people free of charge, for propagation and evangelization of Catholic faith, St. Jude Out -station Catholic faithful welcomed the development with overwhelming joy. Also, they were very much assiduously prepared for more challenges ahead towards independent station and then to parish status with all its responsibilities.

After the transferred of Fr. John Emeka Okafor, Rev. Fr. Luke Omaliko succeeded him as the incumbent Parish Priest of St. Mary’s Parish, Nzam. With Fr. Omaliko’s sincere efforts and pragmatic approach to issues, St. Jude out station was declared an independent station in March 2006, by the Archbishop of Onitsha, Most Rev. Valerian Okeke. Fr. Omaliko continued pushing and was able to convince the Archbishop on the need to move further to make St. Jude independent station a full parish status with full rights and privileges. Archbishop Valerian Okeke, who earlier in the first Archdiocesan Synod, he convoked in 2005, declared his good intention in creating more parishes in Riverline areas and communities in Onitsha Archdioceses in order to bring the Gospel of Christ at the door steps of the people and interior lands of the riverline communities. Thus, continuing the

evangelization which the early missionaries had earlier started over hundred and twenty years back.

Therefore, during the yearly posting of the Archdiocesan priests precisely in early December 2006, the Archbishop declared St. Jude Thaddeus a parish and named Rev. Fr. GMP Okoye as the pioneer Parish Priest and Fr. GMP Okoye was to resume duty and assume the office of parish priest in January 15, 2007. To God be the Glory.

### **THE NEW DAWN OF ST. JUDE THADDEUS' PARISH, INOMA.**

#### **THE TENURE OF FR. GMP OKOYE: JAN. 2007 TO JAN 2011**

St. Jude Thaddeus Catholic community and indeed the entire people of Inoma received Fr. GMP Okoye with joy and thanks. In January 2007, Fr. Okoye did not waste time in tackling the numerous challenges facing the newly created Parish which included erecting a decent Parish Rectory, reconstructing the old temporal church building that was almost collapsed, organizing and reviving the statutory bodies: C.M.O, C.W.O, CYON, HCA and pious societies; Legion of Mary, Blue Army of our Lady, Mary League, Charismatic Group, St. Anthony's Guild, St. Jude Society etc. Fr. Okoye lived in Inoma community Town Hall throughout his four years stay in Inoma because the parish rectory was seriously under constructing. Note: It could be recalled that the parish Rectory was initially started in 2005 by the local church council that is by St. Jude out station members. Fr. Luke Omaliko had earlier mobilized the station to start erecting a parish Rectory on the land earlier acquired in 2002, so that with such move, the Archbishop would be better convinced that Inoma station might be capable of sustaining a priest as well as fulfilling the obligations of parish status to some reasonable extent. So, in view of that, Fr. Omaliko helped them to organized launchings, fund raising and Harvest and Bazaar with which they started something after the initial master plan and architectural design had been approved. Fr. GMP Okoye officially laid the foundation stone of the Parish Rectory in 2008.

Consequently, Fr. Okoye did his very best in dealing with all the above pastoral challenges but however, he was gravely and seriously impeded with serious sickness after his three year stay in the parish. He struggled and managed but as the ill health persisted; the Archbishop had no option than to transfer him due to his ill health. . In Jan. 2011, Rev. Fr. Augustine Orakwue took over and became the second Parish Priest of St. Jude Thaddeus' Parish Inoma.

#### **THE TENURE OF FR. AUGUSTINE ORAKWUE: JAN. 2011-OCT 2015**

The era of Fr. Augustine Orakwue was very much successful in terms of the Parish Rectory. Note: Also, Fr. Orakwue, as he predecessor, lived in the town Hall for another four years pending the major completion of the parish Rectory. However, with the huge financial supports from the Archdiocese through Archbishop Valerian Okeke, who supported the major works in the Parish. The Parish Rectory

reached a major completion with regards to roofing, plastering, putting doors and windows etc but it remains painting and other finishing touches. The Parish also received financial assistance from the Archbishop with regards to re-roofing of the temporary Church building among other assistance from the Centre through him. Equally, the family of late Chief Sir Augustine Orakwue that is the parents of Fr. Augustine Orakwue also contributed immensely towards over-all development and maintenance of the parish. Equally, Fr. Orakwue provided a lot of property and big assets to the Parish which included the following: two giant diesel generating sets, big generator house, garri processing house, gigantic over head tank with regular water supply among other things. May the good Lord bless and reward them abundantly here on earth and here after in heavenly kingdom through Christ our Lord Amen.

Lastly, the parishioners of St. Jude Thaddeus Catholic community especially the C.W.O members were equal to the tasks in contributing towards the general developments and maintenance of the parish which they all assiduously labored to have to the glory of God . Fr. Augustine Orakwue packed into the Parish Rectory in April 2015 and in October, 2015 he was officially transferred to St. Theresa's parish, Nnobi after over four years of successful labour in the Parish.

#### **THE TENURE OF FR. CHARLES EBELE: OCT 2015 TILL DATE**

Finally, in October 24, 2015, Rev. Fr. Charles Ebele officially assumed the office of the Parish priest. Fr. Charles Ebele is the 3<sup>rd</sup> parish priest and incumbent Parish Priest of St. Jude Thaddeus', Inoma. Fr. Ebele now lives in the parish Rectory and he is doing his best in dealing with the challenges he met on ground which are mainly to consolidate on the foundation laid by his revered predecessors. The parish rectory as already stated above has been majorly completed. However, it remains painting of the whole Rectory, collecting the plumping system as well as other general reconstructions and maintenance. With the grace of God and the immense supports from the parishioner as well as the assistance from the Archdiocese and friends and well-wishers, our Parish Priest is able to achieve a lot. First of all, with huge financial assistance from the Archbishop Valerian Okeke, the Rectory floor was tiled along side the sanctuary area of the temporal church. Equally, with the approval of the Archbishop, the Parish got speed boat through the office of Pontifical Missionary Society P.M.S under the kindly supervision of Rev. Sr. Beneth Azuka Ezeokoli IHM.

Finally, with the supports of the parishioners and Fr. Charles: friends and well-wishers, the following works were completed. They included Iron doors and aluminium casement windows were installed in the temporal church. The whole of the church building were plastered and the german floor was done as well as the provision of religious objects of worship among others. Also Fr. Charles has helped in the construction and provision of Parish Sign Post. He also provided the

Parish with sound portable micro phone. All these were as a result of the proceeds he realized from farm works he is doing. Lastly, Fr. Ebele is making fantastic efforts to secure all the church lands in order to ward off the activities of the invading land grabbers on board. Already Fr. Ebele is currently doing a lot of farm works on the land in order that he might sustain the meagre resources he is getting here and also check-mates the activities of land grabbers. St. Jude Catholic community especially the C.W.O members are seriously contributing their respective quotas with a view to developing the parish all the more.

**The following persons served as the parish councilors;**

**In Rev. Fr. GMP Okoye Era: Jan. 2007-Jan. 2011**

Mr. Simon Udeze (RIP)	-	Vice Chairman
Mr. Joseph Egwemi	-	Secretary
Mrs Justina Ogah	-	Women's Leader
Mr. Emmanuel Onochie	-	Financial Secretary

**Other members were:**

Mr. John Omatala	Mr. Christopher Onate
Mr. Maxwell Egwuda	Engr. Peter Okwute
Mr. Alex Ogah	Mr. Godwin Onochie
Catechist Peter Alaobajah	- Catechist

**In Rev. Fr. Augustine Orakwue's Era: Jan 2011-Oct. 2015**

Engr. Ezinna Peter Okwute	-	Vice Chairman
Mr. Joseph Egwemi	-	Secretary
Catechist Peter Alaobajah	-	Catechist
Mrs. Christiana Odumaka	-	Women's Leader
Mrs. Justina Ogah	-	Fin Sec. /Treasurer

**Other members were:**

Mrs. Hanna Okwute	Mr. John Omatala
Mr. Thomas Eneojo	Mr. Godwin Onochie
Mr. Maxwell Egwuda	Mr. Christopher Onate
Mr. Ephraim Ogobegwu	Mr. Pius Okakpe
Mr. Isaac Odumaka	Mr. Peter Odumaka
Mrs. Blessing Onochie.	

**In Rev. Fr. Charles Ebele's Era: Oct. 2015 till date**

Engr. Ezinna Peter Okwute	-	Vice Chairman
Mr. Joseph Egwemi	-	Secretary
Catechist Peter Aloboja	-	Catechist
Mrs. Christiana Odumaka	-	Women Leader
Mrs. Justina Ogah	-	Treasurer



**Other members are:**

Mr. Godwin Onochie	Mr. Maxwell Egwuda
Mr. Christopher Onate	Mr. Pius Okakpe
Mr. Isaac Odumaka	Mr. Peter Odumaka
Mr. Thomas Eneojo	Mr. John Omatala
Mrs. Blessing Onochie.	Mr. Alex Ogah
Mrs. Maureen Omotala	Mr. Clement Monde Anikwe

**ON THE SACRAMENTS AND PASTORAL AFFAIRS IN THE PARISH**

Since October 2015, Fr. Charles met a parish that was luke-warm in terms of the parishioners' spirituality: general response to reception of the Sacraments and other pastoral life of the Church.

Fr. Ebele used his homilies and sermons, which as well served as fora for general evangelization and catechesis, to instruct the faithful on the need to once more renew their Christian commitment to baptismal vows. No pious society was alive and functional as of Oct. 2015 but now Block Rosary, Legion of Mary and Charismatic renewal are gradually reviving. Weekly holy hour has begun in earnest. Fr. Charles Ebele is readily available within the week for morning Masses, blessing of sacramental and holy water, reception of sacramental Confession, Sick calls, counseling and other pastoral activities within the parish. There is now monthly infant Baptism being held every Uka Eke.

**PARISH WEEKLY ACTIVITIES:**

Sunday Mass:	8am
Benediction:	After Mass
Daily Morning Mass:	5.45am:
Votive Mass for the poor and those in special need:	Wednesdays: 7pm-8.30pm
Holy Hour:	Thursdays: 6-7am
Stations of the Cross:	Fridays: 6.30-7am
Infant baptism:	Sunday Uka Eke
Rosary Procession:	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Month
Project Sunday:	Sunday Uka Afo
Communion of the Sick:	Last Thursday of the Month
Sick Calls:	Immediately as they came

In fact, the general pastoral life and activities of the church are quite commendable, to the glory of God.

Meanwhile, since the creation of the parish 2006 till date, the following records are available

No. of Sacrament of Baptism:	459
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No. of First Holy Communion: 182  
No. of Sacrament of Holy Matrimony: 4  
No. of the Death: 18

Inoma has no indigenous Catholic Priest, no Religious Sisters and Brothers (the Anglicans have 6 Pastors from Inoma community). We have one minor Seminarian at St. Joseph Secondary/ Seminary School Awka-Etiti. He is in SS2. We also have one major Seminarian in Philosophy. We are praying for them.

St. Jude Parish is a small parish with numerical strength of about 289 Catholics. (Home branch members). We do not have any out station.

### **ROLL CALL FOR HOME BRANCH PARISHIONERS.**

#### **(C.M.O HOME BRANCH)**

Engr. Ezinna Peter Okwute  
Doc Joseph Egwemi  
John Omotala  
Isaac Odumaka  
Godwin Onate  
Sunday Ojoma  
Pius Okakpe

Catechist Peter Alaoboja  
Benjamin Ugbeda  
Peter Odumaka  
Francis Okafor Udoba  
Thomas Eneojo  
John Edecheogo  
Ogugua mmadubuko

#### **CWO MEMBERS HOME BRANCH**

Christian Odumaka  
Caroline Udile  
Moureen Omotala  
Victoria Odumaka  
Ngozi Nwakonuche  
Helena Egwuda  
Regina Onwadiamu  
Christiana Oyaka  
Caroline Chukwurah  
Josephine Ojiakor  
Martha Onyeka  
Pauline Mmebo  
Veronica Nnebolisa  
Cecilia Chife  
Caroline Ojiakor

Celestina Alaoboja  
Justina Ogah  
Hanna Okwute  
Blessing Onochie  
Mary Omoja  
Fidelia Mmadubuko  
Victoria Egwemi  
Agatha Ojadi  
Juliana Tigsha  
Comfort Nwachukwu  
Caroline Akor  
Christiana Okakpe  
Theresa Udoma (Iyom)  
Veronica Onwadiamu

Agnes Nneoba Omachonu

#### **CYON MEMBERS HOME BRANCH**

Clement Monde Anikwe  
Christopher Onate  
Celestine Ogugwa  
Sunday Anikwe  
Emmanuel Onate

Emmanuel Onochie  
Francis Alaoboja  
Ephraim Ogobuegwu  
Sunday Onyekwe  
Ignatius Nnacheta

Alfred Ekwunugo  
Nathaniel Omachonu  
Agatha Omojah  
Patient Chife  
Cynthia Okwute  
Ezekiel Enetu  
Queen Enetu  
Paul Egwemi  
Patient Nnakwe

Celestine Nmebo  
Stella Maris Omojah  
Felicity Alaoboja  
Francisca Udeze  
Brandaline Nnebolisa  
Doris Chukwuemeka  
Mathew Chukwuemeka  
Anastatus Egwemi  
MaryRose Akor

**NOTE: we have about 70 children, Holy Childhood Association (HCA) that do attend Sunday Masses regularly.**

**THE WEDDED COUPLES IN THE PARISH HOME BRANCH**

1. Mr. Rapheal Odile  
Maureen Odile  
Wedded at St. Joseph Catholic Mission Aguleri  
By Rev Fr. A. Murphy on 17/12/1966
2. Joseph and Victoria Egwemi  
Wedded at St. Micheal's Station, Ujeh C/O St. Theresa Parish, Odumomoh Idah diocese by Rev. Fr. Dennis Guertin on 30/06/1996
3. John and Maureen Omotala  
Wedded at St. Jude Thaddeus Station, Inoma. C/O St. Mary's Parish Nzam. by Rev. Fr. Joe Ben Onyia on 30/06/96
4. Caty Peter & Celestina Alaoboja  
Wedded at St. Jude Thaddeus Station, Inoma. C/O St. Mary's Parish, Nzam by Rev. Fr. Paul Ekwealor on 30/05/98.
5. Alex & Justina Ogah  
Wedded at Iyano St. Theresas' Parish, Odumomoh, Idah Diocese by Rev. Fr. Dennis Guertin on 29/12/1999
6. Cyril (Francis) & MaryRose Okafor Udoba  
Wedded at Sacred Heart Parish, Odoakpu Onitsha by Mons. Clement Okpala on 25/08/2001.
7. Isaac & Christiana Odumaka  
Wedded at St. Jude Thaddeus' Station, Inoma C/O St. Mary's Parish, Nzam. by Rev. Fr. Luke Omaliko on 13/12/2003.
8. Egnr. Ezinna Peter 7 Hanna Okwute  
Wedded at St. Mary's Parish, Nzam by Rev. Fr. Luke Omaliko on 13/12/2004.
9. Godwin & Blessing Onachie  
Wedded at St. Jude Thaddeus' Catholic Church, Inoma by Rev. Fr. Gabriel Mary Paschal Okoye on 09/02/2008.
10. Paulinus & Lilian Onyekwe

Wedded at St. Jude Thaddeus' Catholic Church, Inoma by Rev. Fr. Charles Ebele on 31/10/2015.

11. Peter & Victoria Odumaka ???

Among these couples Joseph, Victoria Egwemi celebrated their Silver Jubilee Anniversary on 30<sup>th</sup> December 2016 with feast and gallantries. To this effect the couple donated four (4) casement alumaco windows to the Parish (2) came from their common purse, (1) from Fr. Paul Nwosu who presided over the Mass and (1) from the couple and their supporters) Meanwhile, Joseph Egwemi and family has donated a lot to the Parish including 4 trips of sands for german floor, some bags of cements etc.

The Parish is seriously preparing for mass- wedding coming up on December 2017, (still making the Parish tenth anniversary). This mass-wedding will be the first of its kind for it is the foremost Mass –Wedding ever organized since the creation and inception of the Parish. We are anticipating up to 20 couples to be wedded that day to the glory of God and the sanctification of humanity through good and role model Christian (Catholic) families after the example of Jesus, Mary and blessed Joseph the Holy Family of Nazareth.

**Note:** This year 2017 marks the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of caving out St. Jude Thaddeus' Catholic Church, Inoma, as Out-Station from St. Augustine Parish, Otuocho. (1937-2017) and also the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of creation of our Parish St. Jude Thaddeus Catholic Church, Inoma from St. Mary's Parish Nzam. (2006/2007-2017). TO GOD BE THE GLORY.

Thanks upfront.

Compiled by Catechist Peter Alaobaja  
Parish Catechist

Doc. Joseph Egwemi  
Secretary P/Council

Engr. Ezinna Peter Okwute  
Vice Chairman P/Council

Edited by Rev. Fr. Charles Ebele  
Parish Priest

### **CHALLENGES AND HUMBLY SUGGESTIONS**

Inoma community is still a village community with no accessible road network. The economic life of the people is still far below expectation. They are generally poor peasant farmers. There is no reasonably evident sign of government presence in the community be it local govt. State or Federal govt. presence. The small health centre here is nothing to write home about and in fact a shadow of itself. The

community secondary school is grossly understaffed. The two major primary schools owned by Catholics and Anglicans in partnership with Anambra State government are just empty monuments. Teachers posted to work here do process their reposting within short possible time, the few that could not make their way teach reluctantly and angrily, etc.

In terms of religion and faith, the adherents to African traditional religion are more. They comprised of up to 70% or more of the total population. The remaining percentage less than 30% is being shared by Catholics and Anglicans as well as very few Pentecostal churches. Many youths are rapidly drawn back to paganism (neo paganism). A lot of people are uneducated or undereducated (half baked education). Hence, illiteracy level here is on the increase.

With all these bedeviling challenges overwhelming us in every facet of our lives here, we St. Jude Thaddeus parish passionately appeal to our Bishops to as a matter of urgency alert Anambra State governor/government to declare a total State of emergency on every sector of economy and social services in Anambra West L.G.A and indeed Olumbanasa communities of Anambra State. It may interest you to know that people nowadays jokingly referred Anambra West L.G.A as Anambra WORST L.G.A, due to the complete neglect and absence of government social welfare services thereby resulting to poor economic life and what have you. We are part of Anambra State and one Nigeria. Simply put, we reach our government through our Bishops to the governor and then to the presidency, the Federal Government. Mmiata/Nzam road started by Peter Obi led administration four years ago should be completed. Mmiata Anam bye-pass to Inoma should be opened and constructed. Incentives and other moral supports should be given to teachers in Olumbanasa. Health centre should be reconstructed, staffed and be provided with modern drugs and vaccines Buntu bridge services should be provided at "Otu Nzam"- (Nzam seaport) to link the island communities of Olumbanasa: Igbedor, Alla/Onugwa, Igbokenyi, Odomagwu, Odekpe and Ode with their neighbours among other provision of social services and basic infrastructures.

Finally, the Parish Priests working in all the river-line of Onitsha Archdiocese and indeed the priests working in Olumbanasa which is the most difficult river-line area should be better taken care of. They ought to be given good incentives and better welfare package. It is obvious truth that the Archdiocese is heavily supporting the major projects in the parishes within the river-line areas. On this, we remain indebted and grateful to most Rev. V.M. Okeke, the Archbishop and most Rev. Denis Chidi Isizoh, the Auxiliary bishop.

However, the N20, 000 given to us each month to augment the Rectory maintenance is nothing to write home about. It is gravely and grossly poor and insufficient. How are we to maintain and service our cars, pay school fees of our house helps, pay workers, buy petrol and diesel for our generating sets etc? We

humbly appeal that the monthly subsidy be reviewed up to at least N100, 000. Remember that the average priests working here do not receive their monthly N30, 000 allowances. A careful look on our monthly Rectory account, various collections and ACF collections of the above parishes over the years will testify to these obvious facts. Any time, we ply our vehicles on the roads to our parishes; our cars do develop one kind of fault or the other due to dilapidated road network. Often, we do repair or replace our cars suspension that is shock absorbers, stabilizer linkages, bushings etc. In fact, we are really suffering here. If you change your four tyres how are you to pay for them with few merge resources available here?

Note: We ply on the dusty road full of innumerable pot –holes from December to probably March every year. Then we change route by travelling through Illah, Delta State and cross Igbedor via River Niger, then we arrived to the parish by bike/Okada; from March/April to June.

Finally, we sailed to our Parish to Onitsha seaport June - November “Otu Onitsha”, opposite Holy Rosary Maternity Watersides, John Holt Company, Ose Market Onitsha; from there we board speed boat and usually it takes up to 1hour: 30minutes on the water before we reach our destinations. All these means of transportation to our parishes are horrible and difficultly challenging experiences. We suggest that Priests working there should stay for three year instead of four years. Already, we appreciate the loving care of our beloved Archbishop Valerian Okeke, who in his loving care has reduced the number of years that priests work here from six to four years in 2013 but we passionately appeal that he reduce it more to three years.

Thanks upfront.

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